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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/657,308	09/08/2003	Renato Belz	21933-US	9743
22829	7590	10/16/2006	EXAMINER	
ROCHE MOLECULAR SYSTEMS INC PATENT LAW DEPARTMENT 1145 ATLANTIC AVENUE ALAMEDA, CA 94501			REDDING, DAVID A	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1744	

DATE MAILED: 10/16/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/657,308	BELZ ET AL.
Examiner	Art Unit	
David A. Redding	1744	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 July 2006.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 6 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 6 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 26 July 2006 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

The indicated allowability of claim 6 is withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference(s) to US 4,226,333 (Percarlo). Rejections based on the newly cited reference(s) follow.

Drawings

The drawings were received on 7/26/06. These drawings are acceptable.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over USP 5,720,406 (Fassbind et al.) in view of USP 6,776,964 ('964) and USP 4,226,333 (Percarlo).

The "406 patent discloses a plurality of reaction containers (91) with corresponding plurality of closures (95) which is placed into a device for performing

thermal cycling (see description of figure 1 and col.1, lines 20-23). Figure 1 shows a ring of reaction containers (91) and a ring of closures (95), each of which are two-dimensional (X and Y axis). The reaction vessels are connected to one another via a flexible connector (94) and the closures connected to an adjacent closure via a flexible connector (96) (col.3, lines 59-61; col.4, lines 1-5). The patent also discloses that the device is equipped with a handle (99,102) which has a surface upon which a bar code label can be placed (col.4, lines 10-11). Further, the apex of the connector (96) is considered to read on the limitations of claim 3.

In Fassbind et al. the closures have rounded tops, not recesses. The "964 patent shows a closure assembly comprising caps which do have cylindrical recesses (figure 4). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to provide the closures in Fassbind et al. with recesses as shown in the "964 patent as a matter of choice of design.

The Fassbind et al. and '964 patents are silent as to providing a tool with having a handle with pin for insertion into the recess of the cap for seating the cap. Figures 2 and 3 in the Percarlo patent shows the use of a tool (34) as claimed for the same function as claimed (see col. 4, lines 40-56). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to provide the tool (34) in Percarlo with the closure in the '964 patent with the containers in Fassbind et al. in view of the tools known use.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David A. Redding whose telephone number is 571-272-1276. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri. 6:00 - 3:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gladys Corcoran-Piazza can be reached on 571-272-1224. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

David Redding
David A Redding
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1744

DAR